



P-05-01

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCEDURES

for the
MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

acting as the
Metropolitan Planning Organization
For the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area

February 1, 2005

Mid-Region Council of Governments
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January 31, 2005



Public Involvement Procedures

BACKGROUND

These Public Involvement Procedures have been developed to describe the process that the Mid-Region Council of Governments uses to provide information about transportation planning and issues to community members in the Albuquerque metropolitan planning area. This document was released for public review on February 1, 2005. Comments were accepted through Monday, March 21, 2005. Public comments may also be provided at the following meetings:

Public Involvement Committee, Thursday, April 7, 2005 5:30 p.m.
Transportation Coordinating Committee, Friday, April 8, 2005, 1:30 p.m.
Metropolitan Transportation Board, Thursday, April 28, 2005, 5:00 p.m.

All meetings will be held in the MRCOG Board Room, 810 Copper Avenue, Albuquerque, NM.

What is the Mid-Region Council of Governments?

MRCOG is a voluntary association of local and special purpose units of government within State Planning and Development District 3. State Planning and Development District 3 consists of Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance and Valencia Counties (Figure 1). MRCOG was created and is maintained under the New Mexico State Joint Powers Act and Regional Planning Act. MRCOG's Board of Directors is composed of elected and appointed officials who represent the various MRCOG members.

MRCOG acts as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA) (Figure 2). As the MPO, MRCOG is responsible for regional planning. It does not construct or implement projects. Instead, MRCOG provides the framework to assure that transportation projects meet current and projected needs, are synchronized to get the most "bang for the buck," and are eligible for Federal funds. Having this framework in place assures that the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the local governments will be able to receive Federal funds for their projects. As part of these responsibilities, MRCOG ensures opportunities for public involvement.

It is important to recognize that almost all of the projects in the MRCOG's plans and programs are being developed by local agencies or municipalities. In general, the local community has reviewed a transportation project prior to the project's submission to MRCOG for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and will review future transportation projects included in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) at a level of detail unavailable at the time a given plan is developed. This public review process includes development of local Capital Improvement Programs and the public

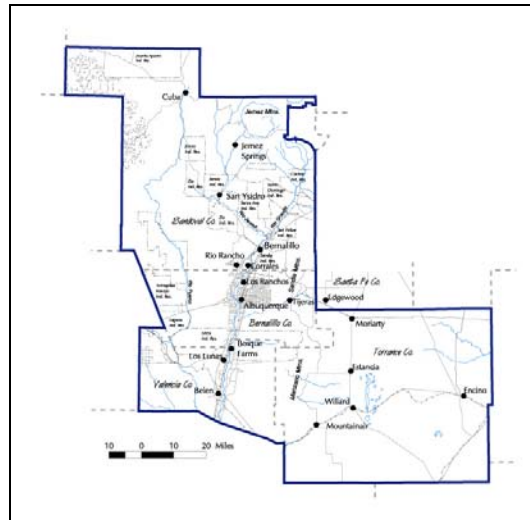


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meetings associated with that process, often a bond issue to support the project, several votes at the local Council or Commission level, and ultimately the National Environmental Policy Act process. This process requires agencies which are developing transportation projects to evaluate the project in terms of its impact on the natural and human environment and to assure an extensive public involvement process.

MRCOG's public involvement process provides yet another opportunity for the general public to participate in the transportation planning process. In this way, MRCOG public involvement complements rather than duplicate existing public involvement efforts in the community carried out by other government agencies for specific projects and/or activities.

Figure 1 - Mid-Region Council of Governments



This document focuses on MRCOG's public involvement activities that are related to regional transportation issues in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area. These issues include:

- access control for access-controlled roadways¹
- Regional transit district
- alignments for new roadways and bike facilities
- alignments for new high capacity transit services
- policies about regional transportation issues (transportation demand management, intelligent transportation system, transit, rail, high occupancy vehicle lanes, etc.)

¹Access controlled roadway: roadway with restrictions on curb and median cuts. Access control points may be restricted to specific points. Tramway Boulevard is an example.

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- possible corridors for new bike facilities or roadways
- the types of transportation options to be considered for a particular corridor
- roadway widening and extension projects that will use Federal funds
- Federal funding for transportation projects (roads, bikes, transit, pedestrian facilities, etc.)

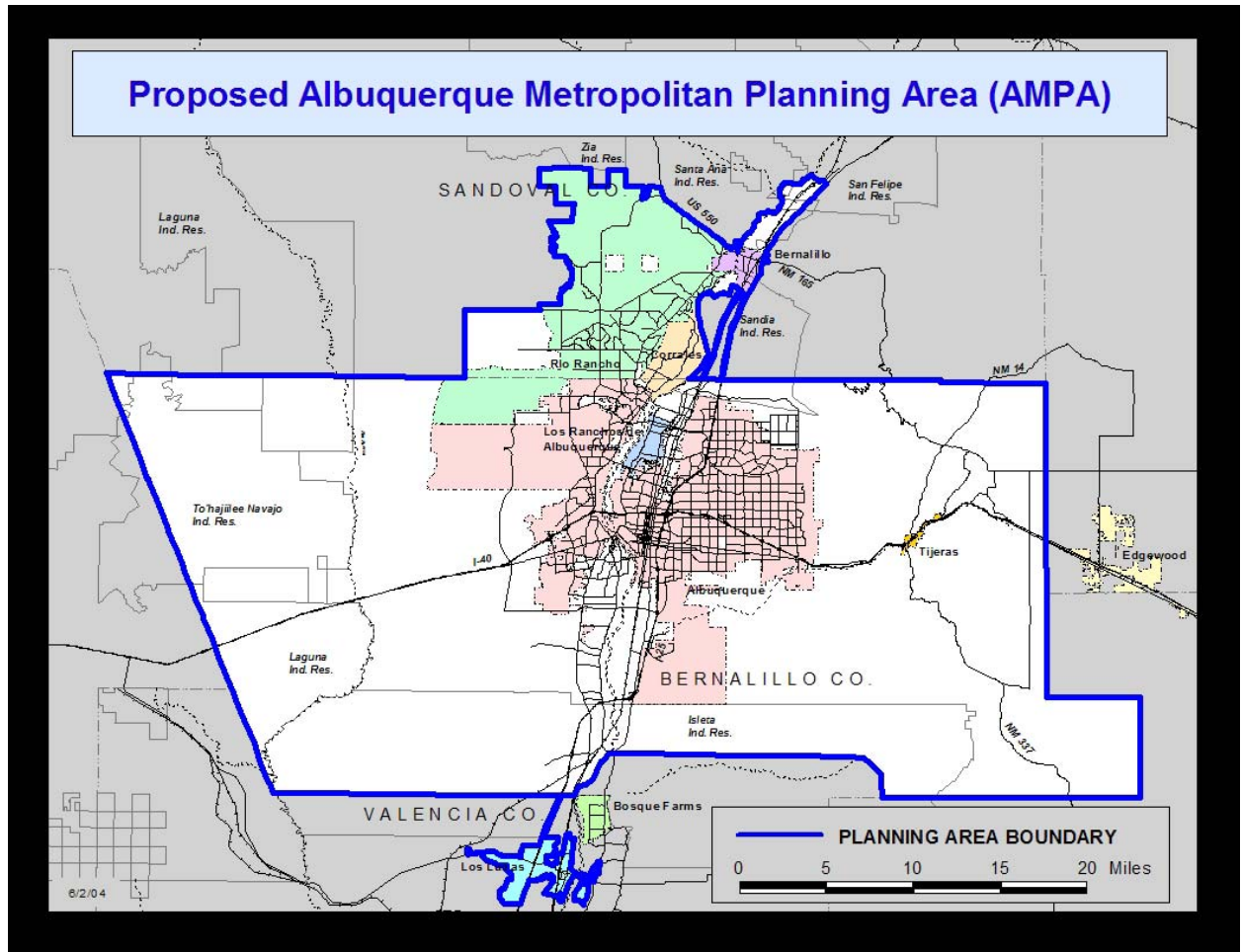


Figure 2 Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area

MRCOG does not make decisions about sector plans, zoning changes, private development approvals, subarea plans, and larger planning projects such as the City of Albuquerque's Centers and Corridors plan.

During the past year, MRCOG has accepted the role of lead agency for the Commuter Rail, Belen to Bernalillo project. While the general approach to public involvement laid out here was followed for the Commuter Rail project, the scope of the project required



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the implementation of additional public involvement strategies. These strategies are described in *Public Involvement Report for Commuter Rail, Phase I*.

What are Public Involvement Procedures?

These Public Involvement Procedures describe the public involvement process MRCOG uses for its transportation planning efforts in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area. The procedures relate how MRCOG will implement its public involvement activities in response to Federal rules and regulations. **The procedures themselves are not intended to be a tool for public involvement.**

MRCOG has developed a number of public involvement tools for providing information to the public about who we are, what we do, the plans and programs we produce, and opportunities for public involvement and input. These tools include brochures in English and Spanish, newspaper articles, interpersonal discussions and information on MRCOG's website. These tools are developed and distributed as part of the public involvement processes described below.

Result of Staff Review

In preparation for updating the public involvement strategies for transportation planning, the MPO held a workshop to which members of the public, elected officials and local government staff were invited. In addition, staff met with the Metropolitan Transportation Board to discuss the strategies currently in place and potential changes. MPO staff also met separately to review the current approach to public involvement and identify new strategies. This assessment process revealed that overall, MRCOG's public outreach is effective in identifying and reaching it's target audience. The primary issues raised were:

- The need for a full-time MRCOG staff person to be devoted to identifying and implementing public involvement strategies and to enhancing the MPO communication efforts, including the website
- Concerns that the Public Involvement Committee may be under-utilized in it's relationship to the public involvement effort
- The potential for developing a set of presentations about transportation issues and an in-house Speaker's Bureau to provide these around the urban area

In response to this assessment, the following strategies were identified for implementation:

- Rearrange MPO staff duties to enable one person to be devoted full time to public involvement and web site development activities. (Task complete. Transition underway.)
- Discuss PIC's role with the PIC and ask them to provide a recommendation to the Metropolitan Transportation Board. (Activity underway.)



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- Develop a proposal for an in-house Speaker's Bureau, to be managed by the new public involvement/web site employee. (Activity to be completed)



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Title 23 CFR450, Subpart C, Sec. 450.316 spells out the responsibilities of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) for public involvement during the metropolitan transportation planning process. An MPO is to establish a "proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs and meets the requirements and criteria specified" in the law.

The specific requirements and criteria identified in Title 23 are shown below in italic type. MRCOG's response to these requirements is described in the text immediately following each section. The full text of the relevant portion of Title 23 is provided in Appendix A.

MRCOG Process

As the MPO for the Albuquerque metropolitan area, MRCOG is responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process and the public involvement activities connected with that process, in accordance with the law. The public involvement process ranges from ensuring that all community members have access to documentation to assuring that their comments have been considered. The following activities constitute MRCOG's public involvement procedures for MPO activities.

Public comment for the public involvement procedures

Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised.

The public comment period for MRCOG's MPO public involvement procedures is a minimum of 45 days. The public comment period for the current procedures began on Tuesday, February 1, 2005 and ended on Monday, March 31, 2005. Additional opportunities for public comment will be provided at public meetings on April 7, 8, and 28, at the regularly scheduled meetings of the Public Involvement Committee, the Transportation Coordinating Committee, and the Metropolitan Transportation Board, where final action is anticipated.

Information about issues and processes

Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to central city and other local jurisdiction concerns).



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MRCOG has developed a number of strategies to inform community members and affected public agencies about transportation issues and processes. These include news releases, staff-generated newspaper opinion articles, reports to our boards and committees, and presentations to non-MRCOG boards and organizations. In the past two years, these have included:

- Editorial articles in the Albuquerque Journal
- Presentation to 1000 Friends of New Mexico
- Presentations to the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board
- Presentations to MRCOG's Public Involvement Committee, Transportation Coordinating Committee and Metropolitan Transportation Board²
- Presentations to neighborhood coalitions throughout the urban area
- Presentations to governmental bodies throughout the urban area
- Presentations to educational institutions
- Presentation to advocacy groups throughout the urban area
- Presentations to business and economic development groups throughout the urban area
- Participation on management/study teams and public meetings/hearings for major transportation projects in the region

The MPO is requested from time to time to address transportation planning issues for the urban area that are not covered by the planning and programming documents we produce on a regular basis. These might include issues such as land use issues, pedestrian and bicycling safety, a regional approach to pedestrian issues, or landowner concerns about a particular interstate access issue. Depending on the scope of the issue and the effort needed to address it, it may be appropriate to involve community members at an early stage. In these cases, MRCOG may establish advisory committees, on which a variety of community members are invited to participate. In addition, MPO staff evaluates and implements strategies from Table 1 that are deemed appropriate for ensuring community involvement for the specific issue under discussion.

When a draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program or Public Involvement Procedures document is released for public review, copies of the document, along with a comment form, are sent to targeted local elected officials, public libraries, targeted local government staff people, and the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board. Additional strategies to assure awareness of these documents, their contents, and the opportunities for public comment, include:

- Information on MRCOG's website
- Providing personal, face-to-face or telephone information to key community and business/professional groups

² See membership list in Appendix B



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- Using market segmentation techniques to identify key target audiences and preparing messages and materials for them
- Using already established community and business/professional events and communication channels to distribute information to the community
- Providing printed materials in English and Spanish, as appropriate

For scheduled updates to the long range system maps, special efforts are made to contact community members who may be affected by proposed changes. This process takes the form of identifying neighborhood associations whose boundaries lie in or near a proposed change to the Long Range Roadway System or Long Range Bikeway System map. These neighborhood associations are notified of the specific proposal which may affect them and of the dates and time of meetings where the issue will be discussed. The associations are invited to participate at these meetings or to provide written comments, which staff then transmits to the committees involved in the decision-making process.

Access to technical and policy information

Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered.

Copies of agendas and attachments are available to the community for the cost of reproduction (5 cents/page). In addition, staff is available to provide information regarding technical or policy issues. MRCOG is committed to providing unbiased technical support based on the most accurate data and analysis available to our community members, agency staff and elected officials. MRCOG also provides a forum for open dialogue and collaboration between and among local governments and community members.

For information about decisions made at MRCOG meetings that have already occurred, meeting highlights are available on MRCOG's internet site or can be requested from MRCOG's administrative section. Draft summaries are available within 10 working days of a given meeting. Copies of draft and approved summaries are available from MRCOG for the cost of reproduction. In addition, tape recordings of the meetings are kept for one year after the meeting.

Public notice

Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of



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plans and TIPs (in nonattainment areas, classified as serious and above, the comment period shall be at least 30 days for the plan, TIP and major amendment(s)).³

MRCOG publishes legal notices of regularly-scheduled meetings in the area's general circulation newspapers at least ten days in advance of MTB, TCC and PIC meetings. Agendas are posted in the MRCOG offices and are made available at no cost to the public during the week prior to the meeting. Notices regarding MRCOG meetings are also published on the MRCOG's internet web site (www.mrcog-nm.org), which provides information about proposed agenda items, meeting dates, and locations. The web site has been redesigned to make this information easy to locate and to improve accessibility.

Special meetings of Boards or committees may be called by the Chair or a majority of the members with a minimum notice of three days. Notices of these meetings and the related agendas are posted in the MRCOG offices and notices are faxed to all FCC-licensed radio stations and general circulation newspapers. The same process is used for emergency meetings, which may be called on 24-hour notice.

Copies of meeting agendas are provided to all voting and advisory members of the boards, local elected officials in the region, media, public transportation providers and to the general public as requested. Copies are provided in person, by fax, e-mail or US Postal Service, depending on the needs of the recipient. Requests can be made in person, by telephone (505-247-1750), through the MRCOG website or via e-mail or fax.

When a draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan or Transportation Improvement Program is released for public review, copies of the documents, along with a comment form, are sent to targeted elected officials, public libraries, targeted local government staff people and the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board. The typical review period for a plan or program is 15 to 30 days. To assure that as many people as possible are aware the draft document is available, MRCOG:⁴

- Identifies target audiences for information about the plan or program, focusing on areas that are likely to be affected by the proposals in the document. This evaluation considers environmental justice issues and traditionally underserved groups.
- Identifies community and business events or communication channels that can serve as mechanisms for getting information to community members and arranges to have staff provide interpersonal contact, materials, or presentations, as appropriate.
- Provides a copy of the document to all public library branches.

³ Bernalillo County, which lies within the AMPA, is classified as an attainment area under a maintenance plan. It is not subject to the 30-day review requirement.

⁴ These activities are NOT listed in order of importance or in the order in which they are expected to occur.



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- Establishes personal contact with neighborhood associations or community and business/professional groups who have expressed an interest in transportation issues or who are in areas which may be adversely affected by the proposed actions in the plan or program. Offers to meet with them or provide English-language or Spanish brochures or other information about the plan or program.
- Issues a press release to all the radio stations, general circulation newspapers and television stations in the area, including the Spanish-language media outlets.
- Highlights information about the plan or program and related public meetings on the MRCOG web site.
- Provides a copy of the draft document on the MRCOG web site.
- Provides Spanish-language translation services to Spanish speakers with limited proficiency in English for key documents and at meetings.
- Offers translation services for other languages upon seven days notice.
- Provides Spanish-language editions of key materials such as comment sheets.
- Provides a copy of the document to community members upon request, for the cost of reproduction (5 cents/page).
- Ensures that meeting locations are accessible.

MRCOG is constantly identifying and assessing potential new approaches to assure that the public knows about MRCOG's transportation products and the opportunities to comment on them. In addition to the skeleton process identified above, MRCOG may expand its outreach activities and public meeting strategies. Supplemental activities are identified for any given plan or program based on known issues of concern, the potential communities affected, and the time frame in which review must be accomplished. These supplemental public information and input strategies may include the activities shown in Table 1 or other as yet unidentified strategies, as appropriate.⁵

Consider public input

Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes.

Following each public comment period, all comments are compiled and provided to the MTB and its advisory committees for review during their deliberations. MPO staff also recommends ways to address the comments received. In the past, public comments have resulted in programming additional bicycle facilities in the Transportation Improvement Program and including explicit language regarding a pedestrian plan in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

⁵ These strategies are NOT shown in any order of preference or likely implementation.



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Table 1 Supplemental Public Information and Input Strategies
Open Houses
Meetings with neighborhood associations and business/professional groups
Presentations on local news and interview radio and television shows
Presentations on the local cable government channel
Project-specific Public Meetings
Workshops
Information in the MRCOG Newsletter
Distribution of materials at County and State Fairs
Focus Groups
Discussion Groups
Additional press releases
Presentations to Advocacy and Business/Professional Groups
Development of Plan or Program-Specific Community Member Contact Databases
Additional Informational Brochures in English and Spanish
Plan or Program-Specific Newsletters
Spanish-language editions of Newsletters
Public Service Announcements (in English and Spanish)
Press Conferences
Display Ads (in English and Spanish)
Open letters to newspaper editors (in English and Spanish)
Ad Hoc Citizen Advisory Committees
Insight and Opinion or other staff-generated informational pieces in the general-circulation newspapers in the area

Following the MTB's final action on a plan or program, MPO staff writes personalized letters to each community member who has commented. The letters acknowledge the time and effort taken to comment and explain how the input was addressed. If a comment pertained to a project-specific issue that should be addressed during project development, or to another item that is within the purview of a member agency, MRCOG forwards the comment to that agency and the community member is provided with a copy of the letter transmitting the input. In addition, MRCOG distributes a press release announcing that plans and programs have been completed and how public input has been addressed.



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Consider the traditionally underserved

Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to low-income and minority households.

MRCOG's on-going environmental justice effort is designed to identify the traditionally underserved and to develop communication techniques tailored to those groups. These techniques are applied to MRCOG's communication efforts in general and also to specific public involvement efforts for MRCOG's plans and programs. For these purposes, the "traditionally underserved" are considered to be low income, minority and/or elderly households, and areas with concentrations of youth 14 and under. Traditionally underserved communities are identified using Census data and through interviews with community activists. MRCOG is also addressing cultural and linguistic differences to be considered when developing public information materials. Analysis by MRCOG's environmental justice specialist plays a key role in determining the specific approaches MRCOG takes in addressing the needs of the traditionally underserved.

Currently, MRCOG efforts to reach the traditionally underserved are focused on providing information to serve the Spanish-speaking population and those with limited English proficiency. To this end, key public involvement materials (brochures, comment forms, etc.) are provided in English and Spanish. In addition, MRCOG staff is available to provide translation into and from Spanish. This service is provided at meetings and, for written materials, in MRCOG's offices. If translation is needed into or from languages other than Spanish, community members are asked to notify MRCOG at least seven days prior to the meeting. This allows time to make the necessary arrangements.

In addition, MRCOG staff continues to work with organizations that represent the traditionally underserved, such as the South Valley Coalition, to identify opportunities and formats for providing information to their membership. This provides the means for MRCOG to identify and participate in events where the audience composition is anticipated to consist largely of the traditionally underserved.

As part of MRCOG's travel model assessment for local projects, MRCOG provides environmental justice assessments to local agencies for local agency transportation projects. MRCOG also provides information to groups serving the traditionally underserved about MRCOG products and processes.

Document public input

When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the U.S. EPA's conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP;



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A record of the input received during the public review and comment period, and a record of the response to that input, is provided in an appendix to each plan and program. In addition, MRCOG sends a letter to people who have commented acknowledging receipt of their comment and explaining how the MTB responded to it (described above). A summary, analysis and report on the disposition of comments is provided in the appendix to each plan and program.

Provide additional input opportunities, as appropriate

If the final transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available.

If major changes to a plan or program, which could not have been reasonably foreseen, are proposed subsequent to the comment review period and prior to the MTB's final action, additional opportunity for public input will be provided. The decision to provide additional opportunity for public input will be made by the MTB Chair with input from MRCOG staff.

Review public involvement procedures

Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all.

MRCOG reviews and updates its public involvement procedures approximately once every two years. The schedule for updates is adjusted to assure that the procedures review process does not coincide with public review of a major planning document such as the metropolitan transportation plan (MTP). MRCOG makes every effort to assure that updates occur prior to public review of the MTP. This allows MPO staff to evaluate the public involvement procedures and identify new strategies for implementation during the MTP review process. This current update to the Public Involvement Procedures is occurring just prior to development of the 2030 MTP and will provide the framework for developing the public involvement strategies used during that process. The review process which was undertaken for the current public involvement procedures cycle, and the results of that process, are described above in "Results of Staff Review."

Coordinate with Statewide public involvement

Metropolitan public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.



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MRCOG staff is in constant communication with New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) Planning Section staff to assure coordination between the NMDOT's state-wide long range planning efforts and MRCOG's public involvement processes. This effort is focused on enhancing community understanding of transportation issues in the urban area and reducing redundancy and the subsequent waste and confusion. This work is focused on direct coordination on two fronts: 1. with the NMSHTD Planning Section regarding planning efforts in the metropolitan planning area and 2. with the MRCOG's regional planning organization staff to assure that linkages between the metropolitan planning area and the rural areas beyond it are maintained and enhanced as appropriate.

Don't discriminate

Be consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each State under 23 U.S.C. 324 and 29 U.S.C. 794, which ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, or physical handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program receiving Federal assistance from the United States Department of Transportation.

MRCOG is committed to assuring that all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, national origin or physical handicap, have access to participation in the planning process and are not denied the benefits of such participation.

Comply with ADA

Identify actions necessary to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, as amended) and U.S. DOT regulations "Transportation for Individuals With Disabilities" (49 CFR parts 27, 37, and 38).

To assure that everyone is able to participate in the transportation planning process. In compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, MRCOG meetings are held in wheelchair-accessible meeting rooms at facilities with accessible parking. Public meetings are tape recorded and are available to the vision-impaired at the MRCOG offices for one year after the meeting. If tapes are no longer available, the approved summary of proceedings will be read aloud by MRCOG staff. Notepads and personal assistance are available to aid the hearing-impaired to participate at public meetings.

MRCOG also provides sign-language assistance if we are notified of this need at least seven days prior to the meeting. This allows us time to make arrangements for signing personnel.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN



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For public involvement procedures related to the development of metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs), additional requirements are identified in CFR450. An MTP is *the* long-range transportation plan for an area and must cover at least a 20-year time frame. In 2005, MRCOG is initiating development of a 2030 MTP for the Albuquerque metropolitan area. The material below addresses how MRCOG will fulfill the public involvement requirements outlined in CFR 450 for the 2030 MTP review process.

Opportunity for involvement

There must be adequate opportunity for public official (including elected officials) and citizen involvement in the development of the transportation plan before it is approved by the MPO, in accordance with the requirements of Sec. 450.316(b)(1). Such procedures shall include opportunities for interested parties (including citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, and private providers of transportation) to be involved in the early stages of the plan development/update process.

For each MTP, a public involvement plan is created early in the development process. This plan outlines the basic process to be used to develop the MTP and identifies key points for public input. In addition, the plan describes how community members can obtain information about the MTP and its development. A copy of the plan is available on MRCOG's website or by contacting MPO staff.

The MTP is updated every three years. A Task Group consisting of staff from local agencies is formed for each MTP update. This Task Group develops the draft MTP document. During development, the PIC, TCC and MTB⁶ receive updates about the document, the assumptions being used and the possible contents of the final draft. These briefings happen at public meetings where members of the public have the opportunity to comment.

In addition to these opportunities for input well-advertised Open Houses will be held and presentations will be provided to business and neighborhood groups throughout the 2030 MTP development process. During the public review period, well advertised public meetings will be held and additional opportunities for comment will be provided during regularly-scheduled meetings of the PIC, TCC and MTB.

When a draft document is released for public review, copies of the documents, along with a comment form, are sent to targeted elected officials, public libraries, targeted local government staff people (including transit providers) and the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board. Strategies to assure awareness of these documents, their contents, and opportunities for public comment, include:

⁶ For a list of Committee and Board members, see Appendix B



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- Identifying target audiences for information about the plan or program, focusing on areas that are likely to be affected by the proposals in the document. This evaluation considers environmental justice issues and traditionally underserved groups.
- Identifying key messages for staff to convey to target audiences
- Identifying community and business events or communication channels that can serve as mechanisms for getting information to community members from all walks of life and arranging to have staff provide interpersonal contact, materials, or presentations, as appropriate.
- Providing all public library branches with English-language and Spanish-language brochures for their information tables.
- Providing a copy of the document to all public library branches.
- Establishing personal contact with neighborhood associations or business/professional and community groups who have expressed interest in transportation issues or who are in areas which may be adversely affected by the proposed actions in the plan or program. Offering to meet with them or provide English-language or Spanish brochures or other information about the plan or program.
- Issuing a press release to all radio stations, general circulation newspapers and television stations in the area, including the Spanish-language media outlets (this press release is in Spanish).
- Highlighting information about the plan or program and related public meetings on the MRCOG Web page.
- Providing a copy of the draft document on the MRCOG web site.

When amendments to the current MTP are proposed, a public information and involvement process for the proposed amendment will be developed following the principals outlined above. The specific strategies to be used will be dependent on the scope of the amendment and the MRCOG's assessment of the level and intensity of community interest.

Public review and comment

The procedures shall include publication of the proposed plan or other methods to make it readily available for public review and comment and, in nonattainment TMAs, an opportunity for at least one formal public meeting annually to review planning assumptions and the plan development process with interested parties and the general public.

When the draft MTP is completed, it is released for public review. Documents are distributed to members of MRCOG's transportation committees (including the transit provider), the Air Quality Control Board, local public libraries, and to community members upon request. After public review, the comments received are gathered and transmitted to the PIC and TCC, who may recommend changes to the MTP as a result.



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These changes are considered by the MTB when they are asked to approve the document. These events happen at public meetings where public comment is encouraged.

As part of its public involvement strategy MRCOG may identify the use of brochures, flyers and other materials which describe events related to the MTP development. These materials, at a minimum, will provide information about opportunities for input. Brochures are sent to neighborhood association presidents and vice presidents, to groups which have asked to be included on this distribution list, and to local libraries, for dissemination through their information tables. Materials are typically available in both English and Spanish, as are the MTP comment forms.

Publication of the approved plan

The procedures also shall include publication of the approved plan or other methods to make it readily available for information purposes.

Following approval by the MTB, the MTP is published and made available to the public for the cost of reproduction (5 cents/page). Copies are provided free of charge to all committee and subcommittee members, including members of the Public Involvement Committee, Transit Department and Air Quality Control Board. Copies of the MTP are maintained at the MRCOG offices, to ensure that it is readily available for purchase. In addition, anyone wishing to review the document without purchasing it may do so on MRCOG's premises or by viewing an electronic copy on MRCOG's internet web site.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

CFR450 also provides directives for the public involvement process for transportation improvement programs (TIPs). TIPs identify transportation projects that will receive Federal funds in the coming three to six years. MRCOG is in the process of working with its Transportation Program Task Group to develop the 2006-2011 TIP for the metropolitan area. These public involvement procedures will be followed during the review process for the 2006-2011 TIP.

Reasonable opportunity for comment

There must be reasonable opportunity for public comment in accordance with the requirements of Sec. 450.316(b)(1) and, in nonattainment TMAs⁷, an opportunity for at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process. This public meeting may be combined with the public meeting required under Sec. 450.322(c).

⁷ Bernalillo County, which lies within the AMPA, is an attainment area for carbon monoxide under a maintenance plan. The annual meeting requirement does not apply to Bernalillo County.



Public Involvement Procedures

Following a call for projects and project-level analysis, an initial draft TIP is developed by MRCOG staff in close consultation with the Transportation Program Task Group (TPTG), a task group of the TCC. When the draft TIP is completed, it is released for public review. During public review, presentations are typically provided to business and neighborhood groups who have requested information, and at the regularly-scheduled meetings of the local political jurisdictions. Following public review, the comments received are gathered and transmitted to the PIC and TCC⁸, who may recommend changes to the TIP as a result. These changes are considered by the MTB when they are asked to approve the document. These events happen at public meetings where public comment is encouraged.

As part of its public involvement strategy, MRCOG may identify the use of brochures, flyers and other materials about events related to the TIP review. These materials will provide highlights of the TIP and information about opportunities for input. Materials will be sent to neighborhood association presidents and vice presidents, to groups which have asked to be included on this distribution list, and to local libraries, for dissemination through their information tables. Materials may be provided in both English and Spanish, as will the TIP comment forms.

Comments received during the review period will be provided to the PIC and TCC, who may recommend changes to the TIP as a result. These changes will be considered by the MTB when they are asked to approve the document. Each of these events will occur at regularly-scheduled committee and board meetings where citizens are provided the opportunity to comment.

When amendments to the current TIP are proposed, the proposed modifications are identified as either policy or administrative amendments. Criteria for this identification are spelled out in *Transportation Improvement Program Policies and Procedures* (P-01-01). Administrative amendments are completed by MRCOG staff and published on the MRCOG website following completion. Policy amendments must be approved by the Metropolitan Transportation Board. Proposed amendments are published in the MTB agenda and all discussions and decisions regarding the proposals take place during regularly scheduled, advertised meetings of the MTB. Opportunity for public comment is provided at these meetings.

Publication of proposed Transportation Improvement Program

The proposed TIP shall be published or otherwise made readily available for review and comment.

Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) are distributed to members of the MRCOG's transportation committees (including the Public Involvement Committee and

⁸ For a list of committee members, see Appendix B



Public Involvement Procedures

the transit provider), the Air Quality Control Board, local public libraries, and to community members for the cost of reproduction. This ensures the document is readily available to the community for review and comment. Documents may also be viewed in MRCOG's offices or by accessing an electronic copy on MRCOG's internet web site.

Publication of approved TIP

Similarly, the approved TIP shall be published or otherwise made readily available for information purposes.

Following approval by the MTB, the TIP is published and made available to the public for the cost of publication (5 cents/page). Copies are provided free of charge to all committee and subcommittee members, including members of the Public Involvement Committee and the local transit provider. Copies of the TIP are maintained at the MRCOG offices, to ensure that it is readily available for purchase. Anyone wishing to review the document without purchasing it may do so on MRCOG's premises. An electronic copy, along with information about subsequent amendments, is also provided on MRCOG's internet web site.

APPENDIX A
TITLE 23 CFR450, SUBPART C, SEC. 450.316

Sec. 450.316 Metropolitan transportation planning process: Elements.

(a) Section 134(f) of title 23, U.S.C., and Federal Transit Act section 8(f) (49 U.S.C. app. 1607(f)) list 15 factors that must be considered as part of the planning process for all metropolitan areas. The following factors shall be explicitly considered, analyzed as appropriate, and reflected in the planning process products:

(1) Preservation of existing transportation facilities and, where practical, ways to meet transportation needs by using existing transportation facilities more efficiently;

((2) Consistency of transportation planning with applicable Federal, State, and local energy conservation programs, goals, and objectives;

(3) The need to relieve congestion and prevent congestion from occurring where it does not yet occur including:

(i) The consideration of congestion management strategies or actions which improve the mobility of people and goods in all phases of the planning process; and

(ii) In TMAs, a congestion management system that provides for effective management of new and existing transportation facilities through the use of travel demand reduction and operation management strategies (e.g., various elements of IVHS) shall be developed in accordance with Sec. 450.320;

(4) The likely effect of transportation policy decisions on land use and development and the consistency of transportation plans and programs with the provisions of all applicable short- and long-term land use and development plans (the analysis should include projections of metropolitan planning area economic, demographic, environmental protection, growth management, and land use activities consistent with metropolitan and local/central city development goals (community, economic, housing, etc.), and projections of potential transportation demands based on the interrelated level of activity in these areas);

(5) Programming of expenditures for transportation enhancement activities as required under 23 U.S.C. 133;

(6) The effects of all transportation projects to be undertaken within the metropolitan planning area, without regard to the source of funding (the analysis shall consider the effectiveness, cost effectiveness, and financing of alternative investments in meeting transportation demand and supporting the overall efficiency and effectiveness of transportation system performance and related impacts on community/central city goals regarding social and economic development, housing, and employment);

(7) International border crossings and access to ports, airports, intermodal transportation facilities, major freight distribution routes, national parks, recreation areas, monuments and historic sites, and military installations (supporting technical efforts should provide an analysis of goods and services movement problem areas, as determined in cooperation with appropriate

private sector involvement, including, but not limited to, addressing interconnected transportation access and service needs of intermodal facilities);

(8) Connectivity of roads within metropolitan planning areas with roads outside of those areas;

(9) Transportation needs identified through the use of the management systems required under 23 U.S.C. 303 (strategies identified under each management system will be analyzed during the development of the transportation plan, including its financial component, for possible inclusion in the metropolitan plan and TIP);

(10) Preservation of rights-of-way for construction of future transportation projects, including future transportation corridors;

(11) Enhancement of the efficient movement of freight;

(12) The use of life-cycle costs in the design and engineering of bridges, tunnels, or pavement (operating and maintenance costs must be considered in analyzing transportation alternatives);

(13) The overall social, economic, energy, and environmental effects of transportation decisions (including consideration of the effects and impacts of the plan on the human, natural and man made environment such as housing, employment and community development, consultation with appropriate resource and permit agencies to ensure early and continued coordination with environmental resource protection and management plans, and appropriate emphasis on transportation-related air quality problems in support of the requirements of 23 U.S.C. 109(h), and section 14 of the Federal Transit Act (49 U.S.C. 1610), section 4(f) of the DOT Act (49 U.S.C. 303) and section 174(b) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7504(b)));

(14) Expansion, enhancement, and increased use of transit services;

(15) Capital investments that would result in increased security in transit systems; and

(16) Recreational travel and tourism.

(b) In addition, the metropolitan transportation planning process shall:

(1) Include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs and meets the requirements and criteria specified as follows:

(i) Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised;

(ii) Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to central city and other local jurisdiction concerns);

(iii) Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered;

(iv) Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of plans and TIPs (in nonattainment areas, classified as serious and above, the comment period shall be at least 30 days for the plan, TIP and major amendment(s));

(v) Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes;

(vi) Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to low-income and minority households;

(vii) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the U.S. EPA's conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP;

(viii) If the final transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available;

(ix) Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all;

(x) These procedures will be reviewed by the FHWA and the FTA during certification reviews for TMAs, and as otherwise necessary for all MPOs, to assure that full and open access is provided to MPO decision-making processes;

(xi) Metropolitan public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs;

(2) Be consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each State under 23 U.S.C. 324 and 29 U.S.C. 794, which ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, or physical handicap, be excluded from

participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program receiving Federal assistance from the United States Department of Transportation;

(3) Identify actions necessary to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, as amended) and U.S. DOT regulations "Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities" (49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38);

(4) Provide for the involvement of traffic, ride-sharing, parking, transportation safety and enforcement agencies; commuter rail operators; airport and port authorities; toll authorities; appropriate private transportation providers, and where appropriate city officials; and

(5) Provide for the involvement of local, State, and Federal environmental, resource and permit agencies as appropriate.

(c) In attainment areas not designated as TMAs simplified procedures for the development of plans and programs, if considered appropriate, shall be proposed by the MPO in cooperation with the State and transit operator, and submitted by the State for approval by the FHWA and the FTA. In developing proposed simplified planning procedures, consideration shall be given to the transportation problems in the area and their complexity, the growth rate of the area (e.g., fast, moderate or slow), the appropriateness of the factors specified for consideration in this subpart including air quality, and the desirability of continuing any planning process that has already been established. Areas experiencing fast growth should give consideration to a planning process that addresses all of the general requirements specified in this subpart. As a minimum, all areas employing a simplified planning process will need to develop a transportation plan to be approved by the MPO and a TIP to be approved by the MPO and the Governor.

(d) The metropolitan transportation planning process shall include preparation of technical and other reports to assure documentation of the development, refinement, and update of the transportation plan. The reports shall be reasonably available to interested parties, consistent with Sec. 450.316(b)(1).

APPENDIX B
MPO BOARD AND COMMITTEE ROSTERS



Mid-Region Council of Governments
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION BOARD
MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority	Ronald D. Brown, <i>Chair</i> Board Member	Other Board Members
Bernalillo County	E. Tim Cummins, <i>Vice Chair</i> Commissioner	Thaddeus Lucero, Tim West
City of Albuquerque	Michael Cadigan, Councilor Tina Cummins, Councilor Eric Griego, Councilor Martin Heinrich, Councilor Brad Winter, Councilor James Lewis, Chief Administrative Officer	Other Councilors, Mike McCan, Tom Menicucci, Javier Benavidez, Laura Mason, Diana Trujeque, John Castillo, Ed Adams and Mike Riordan
Albuquerque Public Schools	Robert Lucero, Board Member	Berna Facio
Town of Bernalillo	Charles Aguilar, Mayor	Kelly Moe, Maria Rinaldi
Bernalillo County	Alan B. Armijo, Commissioner Michael Brasher, Commissioner	Other Commissioners Robert Doucette, Steve Miller
Village of Corrales	Laurie Rivera, Councilor	Vacant
Village of Los Lunas	Betty Behrend	
Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque	Larry Abraham, Mayor	Don Lopez
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District	Hector Gonzales, Board Member	Subhas Shah
New Mexico Department of Transportation	Andres Aragon-Viamonte, Deputy Secretary Larry Velasquez, District 3 Engineer	Rhonda Faught, Muffet Foy Cuddy Mike Plese, Dennis Valdez
City of Rio Rancho	Jim Owen, Mayor Marilyn Salzman, Councilor	Howard Balmer, Jim Palineck, Ken Curtis, Ed Chismar
Rio Rancho Public Schools	Vacant, President Board of Education	Theresa Saiz
Sandoval County	, Commissioner	Chris Miller, Debbie Hays
Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority	David Stoliker, Exec. Director	Robert Foglesong
Village of Tijeras	Vacant	Vacant
NON-VOTING ADVISORY MEMBERS		
MEMBER	ORGANIZATION	ALTERNATE
City of Albuquerque Aviation	John D. (Mike) Rice	Jim Hinde
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board	Stephen Pilon	Other Board Members
Federal Highway Administration	Joe Maestas Don Martinez	
Federal Transit Administration	Robert Patrick	Pearlie Tiggs
Isleta Pueblo	Dale Osborn	Vacant
Kirtland Air Force Base	Carlos Valdez	Vacant
New Mexico Transportation Commission	Norman Assed	Vacant
Sandia Pueblo	Sharon Hausam	Vacant

Revised 1/20/05



Mid-Region Council of Governments'
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION BOARD'S
TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP ROSTER (revised 11/18/04)

ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
New Mexico Department of Transportation	Mike Plese , <i>Chair</i>	Terry Doyle, Patricia Oliver-Wright
City of Albuquerque Planning Department	Joel Wooldridge , <i>Vice Chair</i>	Manjeet Tangri, Jon Messier
New Mexico Department of Transportation	Brian Degani	Terry Doyle, Patricia Oliver-Wright
City of Albuquerque, Council Services	Tom Menicucci	Vacant
City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department	Dan Warren	Neal Butt, Catalina Lehner
City of Albuquerque Municipal Development	John Castillo	Ed Adams, Mike Riordan and John Hartmann
City of Albuquerque Traffic Engineering	David Harmon	Bill Coleman
City of Albuquerque Transit Department	Andrew de Garmo	Bill Slauson
Albuquerque Public Schools Property Management	Charles Atwood	Patrick Garcia
Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority	John Kelly	Loren Mainz
Town of Bernalillo Planning & Zoning	Kelly Moe	Maria Rinaldi
Bernalillo County County Manager's Office	Steve Miller	Vacant
Bernalillo County Public Works Department	Vacant	Vacant
Bernalillo County Zoning, Building, Planning Department	Dan Beaman	Brennen Williams
Village of Corrales Administration	Vacant	Claudia Smith
Village of Los Lunas	Betty Behrend	Vacant
Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque Building and Planning	Mary Homan	Jessica Wilkins
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Environmental Planning	Sterling Grogan	Ray Gomez
City of Rio Rancho, Public Works	Ken Curtis	Leonard Rivera Steve Tollefson
City of Rio Rancho, City Development	Jim Neblett	Leonard Rivera Steve Tollefson
Rio Rancho Public Schools	Vacant	Vacant
Sandoval County Planning & Zoning	Bradley Stebleton	Vacant
Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority	David Stoliker	Robert Foglesong
Village of Tijeras	Vacant	Vacant
NON-VOTING ADVISORY MEMBERS		
ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
City of Albuquerque Aviation Department	John D. (Mike) Rice	Jim Hinde
City of Albuquerque Parks and Recreation	David Flores	Vacant
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board	Stephen Pilon	

Bernalillo County Transportation Development District	Orville Pratt	Vacant
Federal Highway Administration	Joe Maestas	
Greater Albuquerque Bicycling Advisory Committee	David Reynolds	Vacant
Kirtland Air Force Base	Carlos Valdez	Vacant
Sandia Pueblo	Sharon Hausam	Vacant
Transit Advisory Board	Daniel Dunne	Vacant



Mid-Region Council of Governments
**METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION BOARD'S
 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE
 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER**

ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Shared Vision	James Strozier, Chair	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 2	Jens Deichmann, Vice Chair	Vacant
1000 Friends of New Mexico	Joanne McEntire	Dolph Barnhouse
Airport Neighbors Alliance	Alan Marks	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 1	Joe Valles	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 3	Mardon Gardella	Florencio Baca
City of Albuquerque – District 4	Cliff Richardson	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 5	Laura Horton	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 6	Vacant	William Konopik
City of Albuquerque -- District 7	Ron Faich	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 8	Darrell Spreen	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 9	Matthew Blain	Vacant
Town of Bernalillo	Vacant	Vacant
Bernalillo County – District 1	Colin E. Hart	Vacant
Bernalillo County – District 2	Orlando Olivas	Vacant
Bernalillo County -- District 3	Marianne Dickinson	Robert Messenger
Bernalillo County – District 4	Larry Weaver	Robert Prendergast
Bernalillo County – District 5	Bob Morrell	Vacant
Bernalillo County West Side Member at Large	Vacant	Vacant
Village of Corrales	Richard Foote	Robert Bell
Economic Forum	Linda Wedeen	Vacant
Greater Albuquerque Bicycling Advisory Committee	John Myers	Jeff Norenburg
Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Committee	John Weber	Missy Simnacher
League of Women Voters	Helen Wright	Margaret Prince
Local Emergency Planning Committee	Vacant	Vacant
Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque	Vacant	Harry Weil
NM/National Association of Industrial and Office Parks	Toby Atencio	Kerry Davis
New Mexico Public Interest Research Group	Claude Morelli	Jeanne Bassett Leanne Leith
City of Rio Rancho	Eric Wrage	Vacant
City of Rio Rancho	Mike Castillo	
Sierra Club	Vacant	Ralph Wrons
Sandia National Laboratories	Ted Wolff	Ed Tooley
Sandoval County	Jenice Montoya	Garry Wallen
USDOI National Park Service	Michael Quijano	Diane Souder
NON-VOTING ADVISORY MEMBERS		
ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
American Lung Association	Mickey Loeb	Vacant
Intel	Barbara Blewett	Mary McCarthy
Kirtland Air Force Base	Carlos Valdez	
NMDOT	Frank Esparza	
Rio Rancho Chamber of Commerce	Debbi Moore	

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